(c) and (d) Presently, there is no registered demand for telephones in these villages. A telephone exchange at a suitable location may be considered when sufficient demand for telephones is registered.

New Postal Policy

2196. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is formulating a new postal policy as announced in 1992;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time-frame by which the policy would be announced and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) to (c) During 1992 and 1997 action was initiated to draft a National Postal Policy but the matter did not progress thereafter. Recently, a draft National Postal Policy with specific focus on upgradation and modernisation of postal services with enhanced application of modern technology, expansion postal network through traditional methods of opening post offices as well as through innovative methods like franchising at minimum cost, involvement of private/initiative in the areas of value added services, generation of additional resources, steadfast-compliance of the principle of universal service obligation, strengthening international cooperation in the field of postal services on bilateral basis and through the aegis of the Universal Postal Union and other regional postal bodies engaged in the task of postal developmental was prepared. This policy paper was discussed in a meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Communications held on 5.2.99 in which certain suggestions were made. In the light of the suggestions, the draft policy paper is being modified and will again be placed before the Consultative Committee.

Revision of Phone Tariff Structure

2197. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to revise the Phone Tariff Structure;

(b) if so, whether the views of Parliamentary Standing Committee are being kept in mind by the Telephone Regulatory Authority of India; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) The TRAI which has been mandated with fixation of telecom tariff has released telecom tariff order 1999 on 9.3.99. The said order has been held in abeyance till the entire issue is considered by Government.

(b) and (c) TRAI had occassion to discuss tariff proposals with the Standing Committee. The views of Standing Committee on Communications on telecom tariffs were also conveyed to TRAI.

Waiting list of Telephone Connections

2198. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who are in the waiting list for telephones in Metropolitan cities as on 31st December, 1998; and

(b) what measures are proposed to be taken by Government to clear the waiting list?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA: (a) The details of persons on waiting list,